



Seascape Primary School

Information for parents, carers and stakeholders

www.wiseacademies.co.uk

Introduction

This booklet is intended to provide information for parents and the community. We hope this will answer some of the questions that you may have about the proposed partnership between Seascope Primary School and WISE Academies.

It is proposed that Seascope Primary School will become an academy and join the WISE Academies family of schools from Autumn 2026. The leaders and governors of both organisations are already working together to form this new relationship and to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children of Peterlee.

When a school becomes an academy it is important to share information with key stakeholders including parents, employees and the local community that the school serves, in order to give them all an opportunity to express their views and raise any questions.

In this booklet we have set out the real benefits of coming together with WISE Academies and how Seascope Primary School can move forward into a bright future with the added strength of an established Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) supporting the school.

There are an increasing number of schools throughout the country who are becoming academies. Schools are becoming academies for a number of different reasons because they recognise the benefits of a school-led system which means more opportunity for sharing of best practice and effective benchmarking of standards.

The key driver to this academy conversion is to raise standards. This is what matters most to parents, the local community and most of all to our children. We have high expectations and WISE has a strong track record of delivering school improvement.

After reading this leaflet we hope that you will agree that academy conversion is in the best interest of Seascope Primary School and that the school will be stronger and more successful as part of WISE Academies. We would love to hear your views and would be pleased to respond to any queries that you may have about the academy conversion process.

Caroline Stuart
Acting Headteacher
Seascope Primary School

Zoe Carr, OBE
CEO
WISE Academies



Chair of Governors' message



As Chair of Governors I am excited to embrace this new chapter in the life of Seascope Primary School. We are fortunate to become part of a family of schools that work together for the benefit of everyone.

As a Governing Body we can see that this proposed partnership with WISE can only enhance our children's educational experience.

As a retired head teacher I know that the expertise, training and support that WISE can provide will move the school forward and help the children to achieve the best possible outcomes. Great things are on the horizon for Seascope and the Governing Body and I am proud to be part of it. ”

Yvonne Ryle
Chair of Governors, Seascope Primary School

Acting Headteacher's message

Since 2012, I have been trusted to serve the children and families of Seascape Primary School. I have worked in a variety of roles within school and it has always been my honour to work at the heart of our community, alongside a dedicated team who place our children at the centre of everything they do.

As a school, we are embarking on a journey of rapid improvement; we are committed to ensuring every child achieves their full academic potential, are well-equipped for the next phase of their education and are provided with the strong foundations to build happy, successful lives and fulfil their aspirations.

WISE Academies is a well-established MAT with a clear, recognised record of school improvement. Their core values of Integrity, Accountability, Partnership and Trust underpin every interaction and, as we move closer to becoming part of their family of schools, our shared fundamental values

will support us in moving forward together to ensure the best outcomes for every child. Joining an experienced MAT, where pupils always come first, will provide Seascape Primary School with stability, a wealth of expertise, high-quality professional development for staff and, in the words of WISE Academies, 'Inspire Success and Excellence' for all of our pupils.



Caroline Stuart
Acting Headteacher
Seascape Primary School



A WISE choice!

Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) are the government's preferred model of academisation and have many clear benefits. MATs have proven to be the best model of school improvement and also for professional collaboration.

WISE Academies has been established as a MAT since 2011, so is well placed to support schools in the process of becoming academies when they join our Trust. WISE Academies has its heart in the North East of England, successfully operating 18 academies in Durham, Newcastle upon Tyne, Sunderland, South Tyneside and Northumberland.

Over the last 15 years we have consistently improved schools, moving 'Good' schools to 'Outstanding' and transforming 'Inadequate' schools to 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. We are very proud of our track record within the Trust and work hard to ensure that every child in our care both achieves academically and also develops their unique talents and interests. We firmly believe that childhood is incredibly special and should be cherished. Our Childhood Pledge and Memorable Moment Programme ensure that every child within WISE Academies flourishes.

The Trust was delighted to launch its Research School and Great North Early Years Stronger Practice Hub in 2023. The award of both the Research School and Stronger Practice Hub is a great honour, being only one of 33 research schools and 18 stronger practice hubs in the country, and has allowed the Trust to develop strong partnerships across the region. Through our work with our Research School and Early Years Stronger Practice

Hub we are well informed about what high quality evidence-informed practice looks like.

This has been further strengthened in 2026, with Croftway Academy being selected to lead a RISE Attendance and Behaviour Hub to share their exemplary practice with partnering schools to improve behaviour and attendance. Also Malvin's Close Academy became a RISE Reception Networks Lead School, bringing schools together to share best practice and giving access to evidence-informed resources.

Partnership is important to us and is central to the success of our MAT. We know that we can learn from each other's successes. The way we work means that we can use the talent that exists within our organisation in a creative way to allow all of our academies to achieve their full potential. This is how we will seek to ensure that educational transformation will be achieved at Seascape Primary School.

One of the things we will strive to do is to ensure the Headteacher and senior leaders of Seascape Primary School have more time to focus on what matters most, which is the education of your child. We have experts working in WISE Academies who can assist with other matters such as school finances, school HR matters, Health and Safety, IT and school estates.

Key to our educational vision is the provision of an inclusive, caring and supportive learning environment which supports us to nurture the development of each child in our care. This is something that we never lose sight of in our Trust.



Your questions answered

Will the name of the school change?

From the date of conversion, the school will become Seascope Academy. This new name will be specified in the funding agreements and other legal documentation.

Will the curriculum change?

We feel that it is important to follow the National Curriculum so that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum offer. Our curriculum subject leads share best practice with each other. We continue to strengthen our curriculums across the Trust to reflect educational research. Changes may be made to enhance the curriculum where necessary. A strong core of foundational knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics and spoken language are key priorities within the curriculum as they underpin learning in all other areas.

Will we have a new uniform for pupils?

The uniform would not change other than to include the school name alongside the WISE logo on the school jumper. We understand it is important to be aware of factors such as cost and availability of the uniform so we would like to offer a free jumper with the new logos on to every pupil when the school becomes part of the Trust. Until your child outgrows their school jumper, they would still be able to wear their current jumpers.

Will staff change after conversion to an academy?

All staff at the time of conversion will transfer to WISE Academies.

Why is it better for Seascope to be part of a larger organisation like WISE Academies?

Outstanding schools need outstanding leaders and this is central to the success of WISE Academies, which uses collaboration and sharing of good practice to 'Inspire Success and Excellence' across all of its academies. Senior leaders within WISE Academies work together to develop practical and effective strategies to promote learning across our academies. We recognise the importance of this in developing the role of leadership and learning strategies across the whole Trust. There is a real opportunity for Seascope Primary School to benefit from the combined strength and proven leadership that WISE Academies has to offer.

Could class sizes change?

Organisation of classes is very much a matter for determination by the leaders of Seascope taking account of pupil numbers and characteristics along with staff availability and curriculum needs. This is not something that WISE Academies prescribes.

How will pupil admissions be handled?

Parents will notice no difference in this respect. Although the Academy Trust will become the admissions authority, it must comply with the same Admissions Code. This means that the Academy Trust will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the Local Authority (LA), participate in the local in-year Fair Access Protocol and comply with equalities law on admissions.

Would school holidays change?

Academies and Local Authorities can set their own school term dates. Within WISE Academies we try our utmost to match the holiday patterns of local schools as we recognise that families may have siblings in different schools. As a Trust we follow the same holiday pattern as Local Authorities in terms of the 6 week summer break, 2 weeks at Christmas and Easter and a half term week 3 times a year.

Would sessional hours change?

There is no change planned. Seascope already determines the timing of its school day and can make changes as necessary to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Will policies change?

Certain policies will need to be updated to reflect the differences within the academies sector. These will be reviewed individually and will change where it is necessary to do so and to ensure that they are compatible with statutory requirements. Stakeholders will be reassured that the policies of WISE Academies in relation to admissions, pupil exclusions, employment of staff and all other aspects of school life remain fully inclusive.

Will the school receive more money after academy conversion?

Academies receive their funding directly from the Government rather than via their Local Authority (LA). The school will receive the same level of per-pupil funding as they would receive from the LA as a maintained school.

Will this change the relationship with other schools in the area?

No. It is recognised that Seascope has well established links with other schools in the area which will continue.

WISE Academies has a very strong commitment to working with all local schools and academies outside of the Trust in the areas where the Trust operates through collaboration, provision of services and the work of its Research School, Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, Attendance and Behaviour Hub and Lead Reception Network.

Transition is important at every stage of a child's education and therefore it is deemed essential that strong links are maintained and developed with other school phases to ensure continuity of learning. Like Seascope Primary School, WISE Academies has its heart in the North-East of England. Everything we do is focused on the success of our local communities and for Seascope, this would only be further enhanced with its alliance with WISE Academies.



Meet the CEO

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. My name is Zoe Carr and I am proud to serve as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of WISE Academies.

I have worked in education since 1995 when I qualified as a primary school teacher and have spent the last 22 years in school leadership. In 2018, I was honoured to receive an OBE for my services to education and I have been a serving Ofsted Inspector since 2017.

My passion has always been getting the very best outcomes for all pupils through the highest quality of teaching. As a mother of two daughters, my benchmark when judging the quality of any school is whether it would be good enough for my own children.

I have real practical experience of the academy conversion process having welcomed a further fourteen schools into the Trust since I became CEO and have gained further insight into all aspects of academy performance, accountability and operation through my previous work on the Department for Education's Regional School Commissioner's Advisory Board and present membership of the Schools Minister's CEO Advisory Group.

I, and some of the WISE team, have spent time meeting Seascape Primary School governors and staff over the last couple of months. I have also met with officers from Durham County Council to discuss future plans. During this time, open dialogue has taken place and positive relationships have been developed.

I look forward to meeting you at forthcoming meetings for parents and members of the local community.



Zoe Carr, OBE
CEO
WISE Academies



As a mother of two daughters, my benchmark when judging the quality of any school is whether it would be good enough for my own children.”

WE



INSPIRE



**SUCCESS
AND**

EXCELLENCE



A Trust with a national reputation for excellence

WISE Academies has consistently achieved national recognition for its transformative work and commitment to educational excellence, demonstrating its significant influence and expertise across the education sector. Over the years, WISE Academies has been praised by Secretaries of State for Education, Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State, and National Schools Commissioners at national conferences, educational events, and even in the House of Lords.

More recently, our influence has deepened within national policy and practice development. In 2023, HMCI visited a WISE school to acknowledge its journey from 'Inadequate' to 'Outstanding', a powerful testament to our school improvement capabilities.

Below are some of the things that have been said about WISE Academies:

" I firmly believe that becoming an academy can bring enormous benefits to schools and their pupils. And that's often about coming together as a trust. Multi-Academy Trusts are powerful vehicles for improving schools - by sharing expertise, working collaboratively, driving improvements. This is something we want to see more of, because it repeatedly shows that it can improve outcomes for pupils. Take the WISE Academies in the North East, which has taken on nine sponsored academies since 2012. Since then every single school inspected has been judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted."

Rt. Hon. Damian Hinds
Secretary of State for Education
April 2019 – Academies Show

" Those responsible for governance and the trust provide expertise, challenge and support to ensure that the school continues to develop well. They ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled and maintain oversight of leaders' and staff's wellbeing. Leaders unequivocally act in the best interest of pupils, including those facing a range of disadvantage and vulnerability."

Ofsted Report
Welbeck Academy, 2026

" Governance, including the local governing body and the board of trustees, is exceptionally strong, well organised, skilled and knowledgeable. The trust supports and challenges the school's work well."

Ofsted Report
Adderlane Academy, 2025

" The support from the trust adds additional leadership capacity, expertise and quality assurance. This drives a strategic approach for high-quality and well-embedded provision across school."

Ofsted Report
Prudhoe West Academy, 2026

What's the benefit to Seascope Primary School?

The previous section set out the advantages of working together to build the highest aspirations for the young people of Seascope .

By joining WISE Academies, both the staff and leadership of the school have the opportunity for close collaborative working with other strong practitioners to share and benefit from national best practice.

One of the Trust's key strengths is the support of a specialist central team who are dedicated to meeting the needs of all of the schools in the Trust to effectively support the school leaders. Three regional leaders within WISE Academies (including the CEO) are practicing Ofsted inspectors so they know what schools need to do to deliver strong education and achieve a positive Ofsted outcome.

WISE Academies strives to be an employer of choice and offers high quality training for all job roles and also a range of employee benefits. We firmly believe that a happy staff team leads to better education for our pupils.

Into the Future – A Joined Up Approach

Because WISE Academies is North-East based, there is a deep understanding of the needs of schools within the region. The Trust has schools in Northumberland, Durham, Sunderland, South Tyneside and Newcastle upon Tyne.


Conclusions

As can be seen, WISE Academies is built on firm foundations and is determined to develop outstanding academies. Every effort is made to provide a learning environment where all children achieve highly, are well prepared for the next phase of their education and develop their unique talents and interests.

We very much welcome the opportunity to work with our new partner in taking all of our academies forward into an even brighter future



We firmly believe that a happy staff team leads to better education for our pupils. ”



The information in this booklet is provided to assist parents and the local community in understanding the benefits that lie ahead as a result of the partnership between Seascope Primary School and WISE Academies.

It is an important part of the conversion process that we hear from parents and other interested parties so that they can express their views and receive answers to any questions that they might have.

A meeting will take place at the school to give you an opportunity to meet school leaders and members of the WISE team: **Thursday 25th June 2026 at 3.30 p.m. at Seascope Primary School**

The email address for responses is: **headoffice@wiseacademies.co.uk**

Alternatively, should you wish to submit your views in writing please do so to: **Academy conversion, Seascope Primary School, Ellison Road, Peterlee SR8 5NJ**

We look forward to hearing from you!